

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9-24 are currently pending in the application. Claims 1-7, 20-22, and 24 have been amended.

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1-7 and 9-24 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,845,388 (Philyaw) in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,938,727 (Ikeda).

Philyaw is directed to an architecture for accessing a network server using one or more characters. Philyaw includes a user computer disposed on a global communication packet-switched network operable to communicate with an ARS and a destination server also disclosed on the Global Communication Network.

Ikeda discloses a communication system for identifying a desired destination. The system includes a destination specifying tag with a digital code corresponding to each of the destinations, means for selecting a kind of communication, means for reading out the digital code printed on the tag, and means responsive of the reading out of the digital code for converting the digital information included in the digital code.

In at least one embodiment of the present invention, the consumer side restores pattern information printed on a distribution material and returns reply information of the conveyance information to the information provider side based on the conveyance information restored from the pattern information. In a situation in which a method of communication is utilized in which a connection to the network is unable to be accomplished, information required for returning a reply is included in the conveyance information, that is, return information for returning the reply information. See specification of the present invention, page 4, line 22 – page 5, line 3.

The conveyance information in the present invention stores a plurality of pieces of return information such as a URL and FAX number. A consumer can select a reply method from the plurality of pieces of return information to send reply information, depending on his or her situation.

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1-7, 10-22, and 24 are patentable over the references, as neither Philyaw nor Ikeda, alone or in combination, discloses or suggests, "conveyance information includes provision information that the information provider side provides to the consumer side and a *plurality* of pieces of return information for returning the reply information," as recited in the independent claims.

Ikea does not provide or suggest a plurality of pieces of return information for returning reply information, as Ikeda's URL is not return information, much less a plurality of pieces of return information. On page 12 of the Office Action, the Examiner alleged that Philyaw discloses conveyance information including provision information that the information provider side provides to the consumer side and return information for returning the reply information.

Applicants respectfully submit that assuming *arguendo* that Philyaw's barcode can be considered conveyance information conveyed from the information provider side to the consumer side, the barcode merely identifies a product and does not include a plurality of pieces of return information. See Philyaw, column 17, lines 62-67.

Moreover, although the ARS transmits a return message packet to a personal computer for processing, the return message was not included in conveyance information conveyed from an information provider side to a consumer side. That is, in contrast to the present invention, Philyaw's return message was not included as information that was transmitted from an information provider side to a consumer side. Rather, the return message in Philyaw is simply matched information and is *not included in conveyance information from an information provider side to a consumer side*. In contrast to the present invention, the return message in Philyaw originates from the personal computer.

Therefore, independent claims 1-7, 20-22, and 24 are patentable over the references. As dependent claims 9-19 and 23 depend from independent claims 7 and 21, respectively, the dependent claims are patentable over the references for at least the reasons presented for the independent claims.

There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

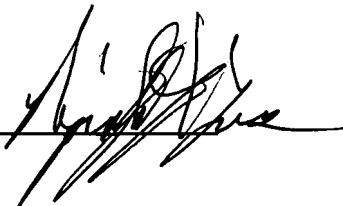
Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

STAAS & HALSEY LLP

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By: 

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